

REMARKS

Applicants and Applicants' attorney express appreciation to the Examiner for the courtesies extended during the recent interview held on August 16, 2007. Reconsideration and allowance for the above-identified application are now respectfully requested in view of the foregoing amendments and the following remarks. Claims 1-21 remain pending, wherein claims 1, 7, 8 and 19 have been amended.

As discussed and agreed to during the examiner interview, the claims as now amended distinguish over the prior art of record. In particular, the prior art of record does not teach or suggest an assay plate comprising a flexible substrate and at least one raised pad having a substantially planar sample receiving surface, with no wall extending beyond and surrounding the sample receiving surface, and the flexible substrate able to conform to a curved animal body part, as recited in claim 1. Similar analyses apply to independent claims 7, 8 and 19, which recite combinations of elements that are neither taught nor suggested in the art. The dependent claims further distinguish over the prior art of record.

Disadvantages of providing sample receiving wells having walls that surround a sample receiving surface are set forth in the application at page 1, line 31 – page 2, line 12 . Providing a sample receiving surface without a surrounding wall is particularly advantageous in the case of an assay plate having a flexible substrate able to conform to a curved animal body part, as this allows for unobstructed contact between each sample and the skin of an animal. See e.g., page 4, lines 14-15; page 12, lines 20-25.

In the event the Examiner finds any remaining impediment to a prompt allowance of this application that may be clarified through a telephone interview or which may be overcome by examiner amendment, the Examiner is requested to contact the undersigned attorney.

Dated this 20th day of August 2007.

Respectfully submitted,


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